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THE ANGLICAN CLERGY IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

BY

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A. B. Illinois Womans College, 1921

THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN HISTORY
IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS,

1922

URBANA, ILLINOIS



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THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

May 31 1922

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY
SUPERVISION BY Esther Jeannette Harper
ENTITLED The Angliem Cherry in the American
Revolution

BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING THIS PART OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF Master of Arts in History

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THE ANGLICAN CLERGY IN THE

AMERICAN REVOLUTION

CHAPTER I

The General Situation in the American Colonies

The Loyalist party of the American Revolution, composed of those who remained faithful to the King, included not only Episcopalians but also Presbyterians, Lutherans, Catholics, Methodists, and a few Quakers. It is true that the clergy, perhaps, took a more active part than the laymen, but the loyalist party contained all¹ races and nationalities and all classes of society.

Loyalism was based upon many of the fundamental teachings of the Church of England. The Anglican church instilled into the heart of each member, the conviction that loyalty to the King, and obedience to the established law were religious duties.² A clergyman, when ordained, was obliged to take an oath of allegiance to the state as well as to the church, and he believed that it was a moral obligation to pray for, and to give homage to the King. Anglicanism was one of the most powerful influences in determining the colonial political parties when they began to take shape.³ We may say then, that the Loyalist party was "formed out of the social, religious, political and commercial tendencies which appeared here and there

¹ Fisher, Struggle for American Independence, I, 242

² Flick, Loyalism in N.Y. During the American Revolution, 19

³ Ibid, 10

during more than a century of colonial history."⁴

Toward the close of the seventeenth century, the Bishop of London sent out Mr. James Blair and Mr. Thomas Bray as the first agents or commissaries to Virginia and Maryland. A commissary was entitled to perform all of the functions of the Episcopal Church, with the exception of ordaining priests. There were many other commissaries sent out to the colonies during the eighteenth century,⁵ but they were not as successful and as worthy as these first two.

During the seventeenth and early part of the eighteenth centuries, the Church of England was established in various parts of the country. In the New England colonies, with the exception of Rhode Island, the Congregational Church was established and supported by the colonial governments, and Episcopacy made little progress during the seventeenth century, although there was established an Episcopal Church in Boston, as early as 1686. In 1760, the Congregational Church was still the established Church of Connecticut and Massachusetts, but the Church laws were less severe in the other New England colonies and a more tolerant attitude was assumed everywhere⁶ toward the Episcopalians, Quakers and Baptists.

4

Flick, Loyalism in N.Y. During The American Revolution, 31

5

Pascoe, Two Hundred Years of S.P.G., 2 ff

Channing, History of U.S., II, 431

Greene, Provincial America, 4

Cross, Anglican Episcopate, 39-43

6

Channing, History of U.S., II, 438

Greene, Provincial America, 83, 84, 91

Andrews, Colonial Self Government, (American Nation Series, V, 306)

The Church of England was not legally established in any of the northern colonies, with the exception of several counties in New York. The Colonial Assembly of New York passed an act in 1693, which established the Anglican Church in four counties, although each parish was required to have church services on Sunday.⁷ Pennsylvania was a strong Quaker colony, and the Church of England was never strong enough to secure an establishment.⁸ The dissenting sects were in the majority in the middle colonies, and for this reason the Anglican Church was not as successful as in some of the other colonies.⁹

The Church of England was more firmly established in Virginia¹⁰ than in any other colony, having been established as early as 1619. In Maryland, through the efforts of Thomas Bray, an act was passed in 1700, which superseded the earlier acts of 1692, and 1696, and which provided that the rules and customs of the Established Church should be followed in every place of Public Worship. This act met with opposition and in 1702 a new act was passed which remained in force until the Revolution.¹¹ In 1679, there were only four clergymen of the Church of England, outside of Virginia and Maryland, and only one in the New England Colonies, while in Virginia there were forty

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Tiffany, History of Protestant Episcopal Church, 164-165

Channing, History of U.S., II, 435, 436

Cross, Anglican Episcopate, 7

8

Greene, Provincial America, 101

9

Ibid, 96

10

Hawks, Contributions to Ecclesiastical History, I, 36

Tiffany, History of Protestant Episcopal Church, 20, 21

11

Hawks, Contributions to Ecclesiastical History, II, 97

Greene, Provincial America, 97

parishes and twenty clergymen, and in Maryland twenty-six parishes¹²
and half of these were supplied with ministers.

In South Carolina, a test act was passed in 1704, which required all members of the Colonial Assembly to conform to the Church of England. The Assembly, in 1706, succeeded in repealing the act of 1704, which had been strongly opposed, and a new act was passed in the same year, which made no reference to a religious test for members of the Assembly. The Church of England, then, was legally established in South Carolina, for this act remained in force until¹³ the Revolution. There were in South Carolina before 1775, one hundred and thirty-five clergymen of the Church of England, but of these not one was a native of America. It would naturally seem as if these men would take the side of their native country in the Revolution, but this was not the case. Most of the clergy joined the Patriotic party, and out of the twenty-three who were active in the colony at the outbreak of the Revolution, only five remained loyal¹⁴ to Great Britain.

A great religious reaction followed the preaching of Jonathan Edwards, who conducted a revival in his church at Northampton in Massachusetts in 1734, and a few years later George Whitefield took up the work Edwards had started. The movement which was called the¹⁵ "Great Awakening," was an impetus to the growth of dissenters.

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Cross, Anglican Episcopate, 28

13

Smith, South Carolina as a Royal Province, 9-11

McCrary, South Carolina under Prop. Gov., 406, 416-422, 445, 447-449

Greene, Provincial America, 99

Channing, History of U.S. II, 345

14

McCrary, South Carolina under the Royal Government, 449, 450

15

Greene, Provincial America, 321-324

Channing, History of U.S., 445

The Established Church would have probably gained strength much more quickly, had it not been for the fact that many of the early Missionaries, sent out by the S.P.G., were men with doubtful characters and they helped in creating a sentiment of opposition toward the church, by their unchristian and selfish conduct. Mr. Henderson, a clergyman in Maryland, wrote to the Bishop of London in 1715, informing him that a "great part of the clergy are very loose in their lives and negligent in their offices, and having no authority to restrain them, pursue practices without control." In the same year he writes "that the weakness of some of our clergy, the negligence of others, and the ill lives of many, have made more converts to that church" (referring to the Catholic) "than their priests could have done."

During this period there was constant dissension between the dissenting parties and those who clung to the Church of England. The Anglicans were eager to establish their church in all parts of the colonies, and Dissenters were not content to sit by and see the church they so disliked usurp their place. Politics were greatly influenced by the Church parties.

The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts was established in America by means of a charter granted by William III in 1701. Rev. Thomas Bray (1656-1730) was instrumental in bringing about this establishment, and he was aided by the English bis-

¹⁶ The James Sprunt Historical Collections, IX, pt.I, p.17

¹⁷ Perry, Historical Collections, IV, 79

¹⁸ Ibid, 83

¹⁹ Greene, Provincial America, 83, 90-91

hops and other churchmen. The object of this society was to provide ministers who should carry on the work of the Anglican Church in America. It was primarily intended as a missionary agency, and the ministers who were sent out and received their salaries from this organization, were called missionaries. A missionary, before being sent abroad, was instructed "to recommend brotherly love and christian charity particularly among all Protestant Inhabitants," and to "inculcate submission to government and obedience to authority not only for wrath but for conscience sake. To exhort their people faithfully and cheerfully to pay tribute to whom tribute is due and to take special care to give no offence to the civil Government by intermeddling in affairs not relating to their own calling or function."

Dr. T.B. Chandler in a letter to the S.P.G. in 1766, speaks of the work which these missionaries accomplished in spreading the gospel, and in securing the loyalty of the colonists to their Mother Country. The English had discovered that devout christians made loyal subjects, and that the Church of England was one of the best agents by which to accomplish this.

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Root, The Relations of Pennsylvania with the British Government, 229, 230

Perry, The History of the American Episcopal Church, I, 198

James Sprunt Historical Publications, IX, pt.I, p.9

Pascoe, Two Hundred Years of S.P.G., 2 ff

21

Perry, Historical Collections II, 491, 492

22

Beardsley, History of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut, 245

23

Philips, The Early English Colonies, 57

CHAPTER II

The Anglican Clergy

There are conflicting statements as to the number of Anglican clergy, who espoused the cause of the Patriots in the American Revolution, and of those who remained loyal to the Royalist party. Charles C. Tiffany in his History of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, says that at the beginning of the struggle, two-thirds of the Anglican clergy were Royalists,¹ while Charles Edward Brugler estimates that seventy-five percent of them remained on the side of the Patriots. Brugler attributes the reason for the disloyalty to the fact that the King paid no attention to the various entreaties of the clergy and they believed that he no longer gave to them the attention due to British subjects.²

One of those who did not remain loyal to the King was Rev. Robert Smith, of South Carolina, who was very influential in shaping the opinions and attitude of the people in that colony. He tried to bring about a conciliation between the two contesting parties, but when he found that this was impossible, he could not desert the cause for liberty, and served in the ranks of the patriots. His influence has been thought to have been an explanation for the fact that in the north not one in ten of the Anglican clergy opposed

1 Tiffany, History of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, 46

2 Brugler, "The Influence of the Clergy in the Revolution," Magazine of History, XXIII, 16, 17

Great Britain, while in South Carolina, three-fourths of the Clergy³ were patriots. There were many other clergymen who staunchly advocated independence and who were untiring in their efforts to further⁴ it.

Rev. Charles Inglis, in a letter, October 31, 1776, assures the Society that its members and the clergy of the Church of England, almost without exception in New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, and other New England colonies, have remained loyal subjects, and have tried, to the best of their ability, to oppose the spirit of rebellion, and although they were not successful in preventing it entirely, they did succeed in checking it to some degree, and prevented many⁵ from becoming patriots who would have otherwise done so. Jonathan Boucher of Maryland, in a letter to William Eden, 1776, testifies⁶ to the loyalty of the clergy of the Church of England, and Samuel Seabury in a letter to William Tryon, then governor of New York, 1772, says that the clergy are teaching "the principle of Loyalty and Conscience as well as Interest."⁷ Reverend Edward Winslow, of Massachusetts expresses his loyalty and the attitude which he is taking, in a letter to the Secretary of the S.P.G. 1766. He says, "During this time of confusion amongst us I have endeavoured to urge upon the people of this Mission a special regard to the duties of

³ Hawkins, Missions of the Church of England, 316
 Tiffany, Protestant Episcopal Church in U.S., 234

⁴ McCrady, A History of South Carolina Under the Royal Government, 1719-1776, p.450

⁵ Ecclesiastical Records of New York, VI, 4292

⁶ Maryland Historical Magazine. VIII, 338-343

⁷ New Jersey Archives, Serial I, Volume 28, p.158

loyalty to His Majesty, and deference and affection to the supreme government of our Mother Country, together with a becoming confidence in the Wisdom of Justice of our superiors there, to alleviate or remove any burdens which may appear to be beyond our strength to bear, and to promote the prosperity of this Continent."

The clergy in Pennsylvania, and those in the colonies south of Pennsylvania, were not as ardent loyalists as those in the northern colonies. In general we might say that the Church of England in the South was more firmly established than in the North, being supported by the most influential and wealthy men. The clergy as a whole were not as dependent for their support upon the S.P.G., and they felt more free to express themselves as they desired, and to sympathize with those who were opposing the crown. This, however, was not equally true of all of the colonies, for as I have above said the Church in Virginia was more firmly established than in the other colonies, and the colony of South Carolina was more of a mission field, for its clergy were largely supported by the S.P.G. South Carolina was the first colony to receive aid from this Society. Many of the clergy served as active patriots during the war both influencing the opinions of the people through the press and through sermons, and fighting in the rank and file. The clergy in the North were mostly missionaries and received their salaries from the S.P.G.

8
Perry, Historical Collections, III, 521

9
McCrady, History of South Carolina Under Proprietary Government, 1670-1719, p.417-419

Channing, History of the U.S. II, 429

10
Perry, American Episcopal Church, I, Chapter 24

Boucher, A View, XIXI-XIIX

11
Hawkins, Missions of the Church of England, 305, 306

Boucher, A View, XIIX

New York has been called the "stronghold of loyalism."¹²

Many of the early missionaries of the Church of England, as I have said before, had characters which were not becoming to ministers of the Gospel. The clergy, however, who were active during¹³ the struggle for Independence, were men of courage and devotion. They have been severely criticized for their loyalty to the mother-country, and for the principles which they set forth, but it is unjust to call them unpatriotic, for they were not. They firmly believed that they were in the right and went on conscientiously performing the duties which they were under oath to perform. They believed that in omitting the prayer for the King, which was a part of the Ritual of the English church, they were violating these oaths. Many of these clergy had been born in England, and besides political and religious ties which bound them to their native country, there were home and family ties. The clergy were not so narrow as to think that the British government had been wise and discreet in all of the negotiations and relations with her colonies. Many realized that the colonial plan of administration was not a system which was without flaws, but it was one which was sadly in need of revision. They did attempt to check the rebellion, and though they wanted reform, it was a reformation which could be accomplished without the shedding of blood and needless destruction. These men must have been often tempted to turn against their convictions, for they knew that in taking a stand against the Patriotic cause, they were exposing not only themselves, but their helpless wives and children to

¹² Flick, Loyalism in New York, 180 (also see, American Archives IV, 4, 4359)

¹³ Abbey & Overton, The English in the 18th Century, 32, 33

all of the cruelties and sufferings of war. Notwithstanding all of the temptations to desert the cause which they had espoused, even when the struggle seemed hopeless, they showed a strength and courage which has seldom been equaled. They were willing to give up their homes and loved ones rather than prove disloyal to the King. The fact that a majority of the congregations sympathized with and remained loyal to their clergymen, speaks, in itself for the esteem in which the clergy were held by the people and for the influence¹⁴ which the christian characters exerted over them.

The clergy exerted a great amount of influence over their parishoners, and it was largely due to their preaching and writing that so many took the side of the crown. Samuel Seabury, a clergyman of Westchester, New York, said, "I must observe that but few of my congregation are engaged in rebellion. The New England rebels used frequently to observe, as an argument against me, that the nearer they came to West Chester, the fewer friends they found to¹⁵ American liberty - that is, to rebellion."

Seabury was well acquainted with the leading men of the time, many of whom were members of the Colonial Assembly. He talked with these men individually, upon the political situation, and he was

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Hawks, Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of America, I, 135, 136

Tyler, The Party of the Loyalists in the American Revolution in the American Historical Review I, pp 44 ff

Beardsley, History of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut, I, 248, 249; 336-340

Perry, History of the American Episcopal Church I, 449, 458, 467-468

Beardsley, Life and Correspondence of Samuel Seabury, 66

Tiffany, History of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 202

Letter of Jonathan Boucher, Maryland Historical Magazine IX, 234

15

Hawkins, Missions of the Church of England, 305

(Also in Pascoe, Two Hundred Years of the S.P.G., 75

successful in influencing the Colonial Assembly not to accept the authority of the Continental Congress as legal.¹⁶ He believed that the extreme measures would inevitably result in "unbounded licentiousness in manners and insecurity to private property."¹⁷ He therefore did everything that was in his power to prevent his people from joining the ranks of the patriots, and it was largely due to Seabury's attitude that New York remained one of the most loyal of all of the colonies.¹⁸

The clergy spent most of the time teaching their people, as Rev. Richard Mansfield, of Derby, says, "the duty of peaceableness and quiet subjection to the King and to the parent state." Mr. Ebenezer Thompson, of Massachusetts, in 1736, expresses the satisfaction which he feels in the knowledge that his teaching "that we should always be possessed with an easy, peaceable disposition, and that we study to be quiet and mind our own business, and as much as lies in us to live peaceable with all men, and pay a ready and dutiful obedience to the lawful commands of our superiors," have not been unheeded, for notwithstanding "the murmurs and disorders that have lately prevailed in some parts of this Province,.....my people are most true and faithful subjects."¹⁹ Mr. Caner, of Boston, later in 1775 also testifies to the loyalty and influence of the Anglican clergy. He says that they have "behaved with remarkable prudence" and that as their people have for the most part remained firm and steadfast in

16 Perry, History of the American Episcopal Church I, 457, 458

17 Beardsley, Life and Correspondence of Samuel Seabury, 25

19 Perry, Historical Collections III, 523

18 Beardsley, Life and Correspondence of Samuel Seabury, 27, 45

their loyalty and attachment to government, the clergy felt themselves supported by a conscious satisfaction that their labors have not been in vain.²⁰ That the clergy were not unsuccessful is shown from the fact that out of one hundred and thirty families in Connecticut, one hundred and ten remained loyal to the British government and resisted all of the measures which were passed by the revolutionary faction.²¹

That not a few of the clergy had similar ideas as to the course which they should follow, is shown through a study of the correspondence and sermons of the time. It was generally agreed that each should faithfully discharge the duties of his office, preach submission to authority without entering into political disputes, and to secure union by "prayers and tears, not clubs." "Fortitude, patience and perseverance" were recommended to all.²²

That the clergy earnestly carried out this program is shown in a letter from Dr. Charles Inglis, of New York, to Dr. Hind, October 31, 1776, in which he says, "The clergy, amidst this scene of tumult and disorder went on steadily with their duty; in their sermons, confining themselves to the doctrines of the Gospel, without touching on politics; using their influence to allay our hearts and

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Perry, Historical Collections, III, 579

21

Hawks, Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of America II,
254

Beardsley, History of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut I, 308

22

Boucher, A View, 580

Hawkins, Missions of the Church of England, 242, 243, 315, 316
(Letters of Rev. E. Dubblee of Stamford, Rev. Bella Hubbard of New-
haven, and Rev. Dr. Smith, Provost of College at Philadelphia)

Perry, Historical Collections IV, 128

Beardsley, History of Episcopal Church in Connecticut I, 300

Charles F. Adams, Three Episodes, II, 840, 841

23

cherish a spirit of loyalty among their people. Another testimony to the loyalty of the clergy, is a letter written by Mr. Philip Reading, of Pennsylvania, in 1775. He says that "many are the rebuffs I am obliged to encounter on the subject of the present commotions, notwithstanding which I am not deterred or discouraged from inculcating the principles of Loyalty to our most gracious Sovereign and a due submission to the powers of Government on all proper occasions." ²⁴ There were some, however, who took an attitude which was virtually radical, that is, who went to the extreme in urging the people to accept the doctrines of the Anglican Church, and who were reprimanded by Anglican officials and cautioned to be less extreme ²⁵ in their views.

A large number of the clergy rather than submit to the order to eliminate from the Liturgy, prayers for the King and the Royal family, preferred to close their churches. They staunchly believed that no authority had the power to release them from the oaths taken at ordination. Many were forced to leave their congregations, because of the perilous situation created as a result of their refusal to conform to the measures of Congress. Nevertheless many remained near their people until they were forced to flee to save their lives ²⁶ or died from the severe treatment which they received. Mr. Samuel

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Hawkins, Missions of the Church of England, 329, 330, 153, 154, 317
Beardsley, History of the Episcopal Church in America, 242

24

Perry, Historical Collections II, 469

25

Greene, "Anglican Outlook on the American Colonies," American Historical Review XX, 74, 75

26

Beardsley, Life and Correspondence of Samuel Seabury, 45-47

Beardsley, History of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut I, 321 ff

Tingley, of Delaware, in a letter dated 1782, tells how he avoided using the obnoxious phrases in the Ritual and in the Litany, and yet read them so as to carry the meaning which he intended to convey. Instead of praying "O Lord, Save the King," he said, "O Lord, save those whom thou hast made it our especial Duty to pray for." In the Litany, instead of reading "Thy Servant, George, our most Gracious King and Governor," he substituted the words, "those whom Thou has set in authority over us, and grant that under their administration, we may lead quiet and peaceable lives, in all godliness and honesty."²⁷

The clergy were not content with merely preaching and talking, but they met in groups in various parts of the country to discuss the critical state of affairs, and to take steps which would insure cooperation. In 1765, when the people were aroused by the enactment of the stamp act, a group of clergy assembled in Connecticut, and agreed that they, together with their people, "would steadfastly behave themselves as true and faithful subjects" and as "obedient sons of the Church of England."²⁸

Mr. Seabury was one of a group which gathered at White Plains, New York, April 1775, and his name is signed to the protest which was drawn up at that time against "all unlawful Congresses and committees." They further declared that "we are determined, at the hazard of our lives and properties, to support the King and the Constitution." This meeting created such a disturbance, and its influence was so dangerous to the revolutionary measures, that it

²⁷ Perry, Historical Collections IV, 134, 135

²⁸ Perry, History of the American Episcopal Church I, 301, 302

became necessary to send out an armed force to quiet the people.

As soon as the measures, passed by the Continental Congress, were printed, the clergy endeavored either from the pulpit, or in newspaper articles or in conversation, to refute any arguments which they might have put forth, and to influence the people not to sanction any acts which might weaken the power of the Church of England and of the British government. Seabury, together with Dr. T.B. Chandler, of Elizabethtown, New Jersey, and Dr. Inglis, pastor of the Trinity Church, New York, agreed to "watch all publications, either in newspapers or pamphlets, and so to obviate the evil influence of such as appear to have a bad tendency, by the speediest answers." 30

These three were not the only ones who watched the newspapers for any bit of information which might aid or hinder the cause in which they were interested. Ebenezer Hazard, in a letter dated February 25, 1775 says, "I have lately got scent of a club of Tories that meets at R(ivington's) every Wednesday and Saturday evening. They examine the newspapers, and direct him"(referring to Dr. Cooper) "what paragraphs to reprint. The club consists chiefly of Dr. Cooper 31 and some officers, but is not fairly formed yet."

Mr. Seabury wrote under the assumed name of a "Westchester Farmer." His object, he said, was "to point out, in a way accommodated to the comprehension of the farmers and landowners, the destructive influence which the measures of the Congress, if acted upon,

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Beardsley, Life and Correspondence of Samuel Seabury, 27
Perry, History of the Episcopal Church of America, 457

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Quotations from Seabury M.S.S. quoted in Shea's Hamilton, 294, 296
Perry, History of the American Episcopal Church I, 450 ff
Beardsley, Life and Correspondence of Seabury, 30, 56

31

New York Historical Society Collections XXIII, p.541

would have on them and the laboring part of the community." ³²

Dr. Inglis answered a pamphlet entitled Common Sense, which had for its theme the advocacy of an independent republic. The first edition of Dr. Inglis' answer was destroyed, but, nevertheless, another edition was printed. This publication caused a great disturbance, and Dr. Inglis was in danger of losing his life. ³³

We see then, that the clergy's attitude toward the Revolution did have a great influence upon the people at that time and as Dr. Leaming said, "I have the satisfaction to assure the Society, that Missionaries being placed in this colony, is not only very serviceable in a religious, but in a civil sense." He pointed out that in the northeast of the colony, where the Church of England was not well established, there were numerous outbreaks as a result of the passage of the Stamp Act, but in the towns where the Church was strong, the people were submissive to civil authority. ³⁴

There were many and various kinds of charges which were brought against the clergy during the Revolution. Seabury, in a letter to the S.P.G., 1775, said that the clergy were charged with plotting with the Society and the British Ministry, to launch a plan for the enslavement of America. He did not believe, however, that the people who originated this slander, sincerely thought it to be truthful, but that they were simply employing this as one more means to place the Church in disfavor with the people. ³⁵ Others, among whom

³² Beardsley, Life and Correspondence of Seabury, 30

³³ Ibid, 56

³⁴ Beardsley, History of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut I, 249

³⁵ Ibid, I, 302

were Dr. Myles Cooper and Dr. T.B. Chandler, were accused of forging prominent names, such as General Washington, to letters, which were intended to arouse the Europeans, and to give them a false impression of affairs in America.³⁶

It was declared after Jonathan Boucher had preached in Queen Anne's Chapel, Annapolis, his sermons on "Absolam" and "Ahitophel," (which are supposed to have referred to Washington and Franklin) that he was making his pulpit the vehicle of private slander.³⁷

Mr. Seabury was charged with signing the protest at White Plains, in the county of Westchester, against the proceedings of the Continental Congress, with neglecting to open his church on the day which was set apart for fasting, and with having written pamphlets and newspaper articles against a Revolutionary government. When the British army entered Westchester county, Seabury was able to give them much valuable information concerning the roads and rivers of the neighboring county.³⁸

Rev. Thomas Allen, of Pittsfield, Massachusetts, endeavored in a sermon to bias the minds of the members of his congregations regarding the Constitution of that colony, which was created on the advice and recommendation of the Continental Congress, saying that it was "oppressive, defective, and rotten to the very core," and that the members of the House of Representatives were only "designing men," who cared little about any one excepting themselves. The people having been accustomed to accept all that their clergymen

³⁶ New York Historical Society Collections XX, 75 (Deane Papers)

³⁷ Boucher, A View, 435

³⁸ Beardsley, Life and Correspondence of Seabury, 36 ff

uttered as truth, were greatly excited over this sermon, and they took immediate action, depriving of authority as many of the local officials of the county as was possible.³⁹

Rev. John Sayre, of Fairfield, Connecticut, was declared to be an enemy to the country "for refusing to sign an association, pledging its members to oppose the King with life and fortune, and to withdraw all offices of even justice, humanity, and charity, from every recusant." He was placed in confinement and everyone was forbidden to hold communications with him.⁴⁰ Rev. John Agnew, of Nansemond county, Virginia, when informed that it was disagreeable to his congregation to hear the Association insulted and ridiculed in his sermons replied, "If you do not like such sermons, you can leave your seat." He further declared that the Continental Congress, in resisting King and Parliament, was rebellious, and that the Congress intended not only to ruin the people and in the end forsake them, but to lay upon them all of the blame, and in this manner make them slaves. Agnew was as a result, charged with "propagating false and erroneous principles" and attempting to organize a party which would oppose the common cause.⁴¹

Mr. Jeremiah Leaming, a missionary at Norwalk, Connecticut, was summoned before a patriotic committee to answer to a charge of having baptized a child on March 10, 1776, at Norwalk. The child was baptized with the "opprobrious" name of Thomas Gage. The committee believed that this was simply a religious manoeuvre and the people

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American Archives, fourth series, V, 1275-1276

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Hawkins, Missionaries of the Church of England, 312

41

American Archives, fourth series II, 226-228

looked upon it as a "designed insult and ridicule upon the cause of liberty." Even after Leaming assured the committed that he had no such intention and merely baptized the child without giving any significance to the name, the committee could not be convinced that⁴² he was innocent.

At a meeting of the Committee of Correspondence, Inspection, and Safety, of the Town of Pownalborough, 1776, it was resolved that Rev. Jacob Bailey, in refusing to read the proclamations issued by the Continental Congress, especially that of the Declaration of Independence, had revealed his contempt for the Congress and denied its authority. He was therefore declared to be a "dangerous enemy⁴³ to the rights and liberties of these United States." Samuel Peters, of Hebron, Connecticut, was one of the most unpopular of the clergy. He was accused of having written improper articles for newspapers,⁴⁴ and for representing affairs falsely to his friends in England. There were many similar charges brought against the clergy during⁴⁵ this critical period.

The general attitude of the Dissenters toward the Anglican clergy, during this period of the Revolution, was one of suspicion and hatred. The clergy had been, as I have said, faithful followers of the King, and the Dissenters never doubted for a moment but that

42

American Archives, fourth series, V, 405-406

43

Ibid, fifth series, III, 733-735

44

Beardsley, History of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut, I, 306

45

For other cases see:

American Archives, fourth series, III, 16

Ibid, fifth series, III, 96

Ibid, fourth series, I, 711, 712

Ibid, fourth series, VI, 712

Calendar of Virginia State Papers, II, 305, 362, 561

they would continue steadfast in their allegiance. This hatred did not spring up all at once, because of the approach of the Revolution, but it began many years before, and only became more intense as the struggle for independence caused political parties to become more sharply defined. Mr. Weeks, in his Church and State in North Carolina, shows that the Cary Rebellion (1707) was a protest of the numerous Dissenters of North Carolina "against the arrogance, pride and attempted oppression of the churchmen." They were not in sympathy with the Church of England and they opposed its clergymen on every occasion that was possible.⁴⁶ In those colonies where the Anglican system was established, the Dissenters were indignant to think that they were required to support the clergy of a church, which they did not sanction. In Virginia a petition was sent from the Dissenters to the delegates and representatives at Williamsburg, which contained their objections to supporting the Anglican clergy.⁴⁷ The dissenting sects did not always wait to make sure that a clergyman was guilty of supposed wrong doing, but threatened them upon the slightest suspicion.⁴⁸ Insults, such as "Tory" and "Traitor," and threats of various types were constantly flung at them as they passed down the streets.⁴⁹ A clergyman was often forced to stop in the middle of his sermon, by Dissenters filling the church and pulling him from his reading desk, or threatening him with violent punishment if he did

46

Weeks, Church and State in North Carolina, in John Hopkins University Studies, X, 53

47

Virginia Magazine of History and Biography XVIII, 256

48

Letter of Mr. Barton in Pascoe, Two Hundred Years of S.P.G., 39

49

Letter of Inglis, Ecclesiastical Records of New York, Vi, 4296

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not cease at once. The Dissenters were disturbed over the fact that the Anglican clergy stood a much better chance of obtaining important political positions because of their relationship with the Bishop of London, who was a friend of the King, and because they were certain to do all that was in their power to strengthen the Church of England in America.⁵¹ It made little difference, how discreetly a clergyman conducted himself, for the patriots seemed to think "that those who were not for them were against them," and⁵² that they were to be treated accordingly. This attitude toward the Anglican clergy was not altered by the Treaty of Peace, as is shown in a letter from Rev. Leaming to Bishop White in 1787. He says that the Infidels and Dissenters, even though they disagree among themselves, have all united to secure the destruction of the Church of England.⁵³

50

Letter of Inglis, Ecclesiastical Records of New York, VI, 4293
(This letter is valuable for the state of the clergy in general)

51

Van Tyne, Influence of the Clergy and of Religious and Sectarian Forces in the American Revolution, in American Historical Review, XIX, 46

52

Ecclesiastical Records of New York, VI, 4293

53

Beardsley, Life and Correspondence of Seabury, 306, 307

For further references concerning the people's attitude see, Letter of Dr. Chandler, 1766, Hawks, Contributions to Ecclesiastical History of America, II, 250

American Archives, fourth series, II, 350

Beardsley, History of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut, I, 243-244

CHAPTER III

The Struggle for an Episcopate

The struggle for the establishment of an Episcopate in the colonies was without doubt one of the chief causes for discord. The Dissenters had brought with them to America, a feeling of bitter hatred toward anything which related to the Anglican Church and accordingly when an attempt was made to establish resident bishops of that church, the people were aroused to action. They became more antagonistic to the British government with every renewed effort to establish an Episcopate, for they feared that this was only a devise of the British Ministry to further subject the colonies to its control.¹ Dr. Cross shows that the attempt at this time of the Anglicans, led by the clergy, "was at least one of the causes tending to accentuate that growing alienation."²

It is natural to suppose that the clergy would take an active part in urging the establishment of resident bishops. Many sermons were preached on the subject of the Anglican Episcopate and each sermon brought forth fresh outbursts of apposition. Jonathan Boucher, in his volume entitled The View and Consequences of the American Revolution, sets forth his views concerning such establishment. He thinks that it is mere foolishness to entertain the fear "that the arrival of bishops may kindle such a flame as may

¹ Cross, The Anglican Episcopate and the American Colonies, 270-271

² Ibid, 157

possibly put a period to the British empire in America."³ Why should it excite the Americans when he (the bishop) would only be concerned with the Anglican clergy. He would not be "clogged with civil power," but would have jurisdiction only over the clergy of the one church. Boucher challenges any one to show him a church government which is so moderate. He pleads for such an establishment on the grounds that the number of candidates for orders would be greatly increased when they would no longer find it necessary to cross the ocean to be ordained, that morality and sound religion would be established, and that the Episcopate should not be denied them for the simple fact that it was a part of the church organization.⁴ There has been a tendency to stress the idea that the clergy wanted the Episcopate for civil reasons only. There is reason to believe that they were prompted by spiritual motives as well, and it is unfortunate that a political strife resulted.

A committee of clergy from New York and New Jersey, among whom were Drs. Anchmuntz, Chandler, and Inglis, presented an address to the Earl of Hillsborough, concerning the deplorable state of the church in those parts because of the absence of bishops. They argued that without bishops the people would naturally drift to an independency in religion, and if this were permitted, a republicanism would be stimulated. Independency in religion and republicanism were to these devout clergymen, two of the greatest evils that existed. Without bishops the dissenting sects would increase to

³ Boucher, A View etc. 143

⁴ Ibid, 89-152

such an alarming state that the Church of England would be in time
⁵
 forced out of existence.

The opposition to the introduction of an Episcopate called forth expressions of disapproval and resulted in several controversies waged in newspapers and pamphlets, which took place on the eve of the outbreak of the Revolution. Two of the best known were the Mayhew controversy (1760-1770) and the Chandler-Chauncey controversy (1767-1771). Jonathan Mayhew, a congregational minister in Boston, tried to prove that the S.P.G. had long had as its object the extermination of Presbyterianism, and intended to establish in its place, an Episcopate. His attack stirred up the Anglicans and his arguments were refuted by several of the Church, among whom were Rev. Arthur Browne, of Portsmouth, and Rev. East Apthorp, a missionary at Cambridge, and Archbishop Secker. A pamphlet war was waged between Dr. Charles Chauncey, a well-known Boston clergyman, who strongly opposed the Episcopate, and Dr. Thomas Bradbury Chandler, of Elizabethtown, New Jersey. These controversies only heightened and intensified the feeling of distrust and suspicion of the Anglican clergy, strengthened to opposition against them, and outlined more
⁶
 clearly political or party lines. The people were more susceptible to strong opposition at this time when Great Britain seemed to be encroaching on the political rights of the colonists, and they were more suspicious of any action taken by the clergy of the Church of England, because of the close relation which they bore to the British government. The people were becoming more democratic, and they

⁵
New Jersey Archives X, 312

⁶
 Crossa, The Anglican Episcopate, 139-195

were loathe to give up any power which might fall to the clergy, and of course, they felt that power gained by the clergy, was also the same as in the hands of the King.⁷

The Anglican clergy were not unanimous, however, in urging the introduction of an Establishment at this time. A meeting was held June, 1771, at William and Mary's College in Virginia, to discuss the subject of an Episcopate. Two of the leading clergymen in Virginia, Rev. Samuel Henly and Rev. Thomas Gwatkin, and professors in William and Mary's College, opposed the introduction of an American Episcopate on the grounds that if such an establishment were introduced at this critical time, it would not only increase the fears of the Protestant dissenters to an alarming degree, but it would weaken the bonds between Great Britain and the colonies to such an extent that it might eventually lead to disruption.⁸

Dr. Johnson thought that the ideal moment for introducing bishops was just at the time when there was a general rejoicing over the repeal of the Stamp Act, for he believed that the people "would rather twenty bishops were sent them than the act enforced."⁹

At the time of the revolt of the American colonies from Great Britain, the struggle for an American Episcopate was not thought of as being a cause of the Revolution, but Jonathan Boucher writes in 1797 that "it is now indisputable,..... that the former contributed not a little to render the latter successful." He also says that

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⁷ Hawkins, Missions of the Church of England, 390

⁸ Perry, History of the American Episcopal Church I, 419-420

Hawks, Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of America, I,

Cross, The Anglican Episcopate, 232-236

Boucher refers to these opposing clergymen in his sermon on the Episcopate, A View etc., 94-95

⁹ Tiffany, History of Protestant Episcopal Church, 152

¹⁰ Boucher, A View etc., 150

"it served to keep the public mind in a state of ferment and effervescence, to make them jealous and suspicious of all measures not brought forward by demagogues and above all, to train and habituate the people to opposition."¹¹ John Adams expressed a similar idea when he wrote that "Episcopacy contributed fifty years ago as much as any other cause" to urge the people to close thinking on the constitutional authority of Parliament over the colonies.¹²

There was another controversy in which the clergy played a leading part and which helped to arouse the people to bitter antagonism. This was a debate over salaries which took place between the state legislatures of Virginia and Maryland, and the Anglican clergy.¹³ A law had been passed in Virginia in 1696, which provided that 16,000 pounds of tobacco should serve as a yearly salary for each clergyman. The tobacco crop was almost a total failure in the year 1757, and the people did not feel able to pay their apportionment to the church, in tobacco. The General Assembly, therefore, declared that money could be substituted for tobacco at the rate of two pence per pound. Many of the clergymen at once objected to this interference with their salaries. They knew that if they received the regular proportionment of tobacco their income would be far greater than if they received the money, for the scarcity of tobacco

11

Boucher, A View etc., 149

12

Works XI, 135 (Letter to Dr. J. Morse 1815)

Jesse Macy in his volume entitled The English Constitution, A Commentary on It's Nature and Growth, p.379, says, "The Religious Question was never prominent in America. It was arbitrary taxation and not the fear of Popery which maddened the colonists to the point of rebellion in the time of the later Stuarts."

13

Henning, Statutes III, 152

had raised the price to a considerable extent. In 1762, Rev. James Murray, was one of a number of clergy who brought suits against the collectors of the various parishes, in the attempt to enforce the payment of salaries in tobacco, as specified by the act of 1696. Patrick Henry acted as council for the defence and the jury yielded to his eloquence, and Murray was defeated in his particular case, as well as the cause of the clergy in general. The people as a whole became intensely interested in the contest and took sides with the two contestants. Articles expressing bitterness and hatred, both of the clergy and of the Legislature, were published in the press.¹⁴

14

Hawks, Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History etc., I, 117-125

Avery, History of the U.S., V, 44

(For similar conditions in Maryland see Hawks, Contributions etc, II, 245 ff)

For correspondence concerning this controversy see, Perry, Historical Collections I, 286 ff

CHAPTER IV

Theories and Opinions

Jonathan Boucher, of Maryland and Virginia, was one of the leading clergy of this period. He believed "that the true way to escape a danger is fairly to meet it."¹ Boucher was eager to avert the coming revolt and he says, "I endeavored in my sermons, and in various pieces published in the gazettes of the country, to check the immense mischief that was impending, but I endeavored in vain. I was soon restrained from preaching, and the press was no longer open to me."² He was daily threatened with disaster and he answered these threats in his sermons.³ He says that in one of his regular Sunday preaching services, he happened to recommend to his people the advisability of remaining peaceful. A few of his congregation immediately arose in arms and left the church, avowing that the sermon was a "stroke at the times." "This was a signal to the people to consider every sermon of mine as hostile to the views and interests of America; and accordingly I never went into a pulpit without something disagreeable happening."⁴

Boucher attributes the cause of all the trouble between Great Britain and her American Colonies, to the fact that the former was

¹ Notes and Queries, fifth series, VI, 142

² Ibid, 142

³ Ibid, 82

⁴ Ibid, 140

only concerned with getting the colonies settled, and did not in the least interest herself in establishing a suitable colonial administration.⁵ He advocates a remodelling of the colonial governments, "not any violent alterations, but some Pith and Energy should be given to the executive Parts of Them: in most of Them, for a long Time they have scarce had any: They never had enough."⁶ It must not be supposed that Boucher in urging such a reformation, was sanctioning an extension of the democratic tendency, for he took the directly opposite view, and thought there had always been too much weight thrown into the popular scale. "The Parent State (at a distance, and soothed by fair appearances, or overawed by the supposed difficulty of mending what every administration hoped might last at least as long as they could hope to remain in power) either saw not, nor heeded not, the latent mischief, till at length it broke out with a force that was irresistable."⁷ Dr. Chandler agreed with Boucher that the disruption was due to the unsatisfactory manner in which Great Britain conducted her colonial affairs, and he questioned whether it might not be plausible, that Providence had intended the rebellion to serve as a punishment to Great Britain for her neglect.⁸

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Maryland Historical Magazine, VIII, 246 Letter to William Knox, 1775
Boucher, A View etc., XXXVII

6

Maryland Historical Magazine, VIII, 247

7

Boucher, A View etc., XXXVII

Maryland Historical Magazine, IX, 335, 386

8

Dr. Chandler's letters, 1766, 1771, in

Hawkins, Missions of the Church of England, 154-157

Pascoe, Two Hundred Years of S.P.G., 55

Beardsley, History of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut, 245

The object of the Revolution, as Boucher saw it, was "to bring a numerous and unruly People to a right sense of their Duty and their Interest." This was to be accomplished not merely with arms, for only an embargo on colonial trade would thoroughly convince those rebelling, that they could not long remain independent from Great Britain.⁹ He thought that it would probably prove inexpedient for the English to attempt to engage the colonists in battle, for the latter, instead of meeting them openly, would hide behind trees and fight behind their backs.¹⁰ He warns the people, however, not to remain in a state of neutrality,¹¹ and urges them to have fortitude as they suffer from the "mockings, scourgings, bonds and imprisonments" which they will undoubtedly receive when they take the decided^{stand}_^ of opposition which he advocates, against the Patriotic Party, which is ruled by the "capricious resolves and passionate opinions of a self-created junto."¹² He cautions his congregations not to listen to the dangerous resolves and measures, passed by those Congresses, all of which are illegal and which are composed of the ignorant and those who are unequal to the task they have undertaken, and who are plunging the country into all the horrors of civil war.¹³ Boucher not only considered a revolt from Great Britain to be "the greatest evil and heaviest calamity" which could befall the American people,

⁹ Maryland Historical Magazine VIII, 249-252 (Letter to William Knox, 1775)

¹⁰ Ibid, 252

¹¹ Boucher, A View etc., 581

¹² Ibid, 408

¹³ Ibid, 391-392

Maryland Historical Magazine, VIII, 239

but he thought that the majority of the people regarded such a revolt in a similar manner. He was in favor of granting independence to those who desired it, "but to cast off those also who can have offended only by being perhaps intemperately loyal; to forbear to govern those who are willing to be governed, is not only injustice,¹⁴ but tyranny."

Boucher points out the fact that "no government on earth is infallible,"¹⁵ and that civil broils are the luxuriant offsprings of the best formed governments." He is not so prejudicially in favor of the English government, that he fails to see that not all of the British measures were prudent, but he believes these errors to have been enlarged and exaggerated, for the English government never oppressed them, "and yet it is solely on a charge of injustice, and¹⁶ rigour and oppression, that our herdsmen have stirred up this strife!" Individuals are seldom perfect, and therefore it should not be expected that a body such as Parliament should never make a mistake. It is unjust to conclude that because Parliament has erred once or twice, she will continue to do so. He cites the Stamp Act as an example. The people opposed the Act, and it was repealed without shedding a drop of blood. If such a repeal was accomplished in one instance, why could not the people avail themselves of the same means to bring about similar results, with regard to other offensive¹⁷ and unpopular measures?

¹⁴
Boucher, A View etc., 370

¹⁵
Ibid, 417

¹⁶
Ibid, 371

¹⁷
Ibid, 418

Maryland Historical Magazine VIII, 247 Letter to William Knox, 1775

Boucher reproves the people for their insincerity and lack of loyalty to the mother who has nourished them through their days of infancy. They came to America, not because they were forced to leave England, but for various personal reasons, and Great Britain instead of withdrawing her protection, watched carefully over them. He says that the colonists express their gratitude with insults and abuse, "the moment that our Parent ceases to foster and fondle us,¹⁸ or that we imagine she ceases."

Boucher held steadfastly to the doctrine that only those theories of Government which originated in the Scriptures, could be¹⁹ adopted without difficulty. He regrets that all of the "good old doctrines of our venerable Divines, founded as they are on Scripture and on sound Philosophy, are now made to give away to (what we are pleased to call) the deductions of Reason, as if it were possible that sound Reason should ever be at variance with Revelation."

Boucher agrees with Hobbes that wise men will "rather choose to brook with patience some inconveniences under government (because human affairs cannot possible be without some) than self-opinionated-²⁰ly disturb the quiet of the public." If the people should ask for a redress of their grievances, and if the British Parliament should refuse to grant such a concession then there was nothing left for the people to do but to be "sorry and grieved" and to suffer their disappointment by thinking that it was not owing to any misconduct of their own. Human life after all is merely a succession of dis-

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Boucher, A View, 373-374, 475

19

Ibid, 523

20

Ibid, 544

appointments and those who say that such submission and humbleness are contemptible are misinformed, for according to the Scriptures there is no better way to overcome such unlawful commands than to²¹ patiently suffer.

The time will come, Boucher affirms, when the colonists will grow tired of the confusions and oppressions which are sure to follow a separation of the two countries and looking back on the period when they were under the protection of Great Britain, they will beg²² for that security once more. If they do not attempt to reunite, a final downfall is inevitable. This downfall of the confederated government will come from the north. He says; "that the snow clad deserts of Arcadia and Canada will at some future period.....finally give law to all North America, and also the West India Islands. They will either be called in, as the Saxons were into this island, as allies to some weak and oppressed State or States, or they will issue, like all over-stocked hives, in quest of less crowded and²³ more fertile settlements."

From the time that a creak with the mother country was appar-²⁴ ent, Boucher was pleading for a closer union. When he realized that independence was a certainty, he set about to formulate a new plan of union, which differed in many respects from the old one. He proposed that Great Britain and the colonies should form an alliance. Each should be entirely independent of the other, each making her

21

Boucher, A View, 557-560

22

Ibid, 368

23

Ibid, IXX11

(Jay, in The Federalist Papers, in Works of Alexander Hamilton IX, P.24, gives a similar idea)

24

Boucher, A View, 375

own laws, but the government of each should be similar in character. The subjects of one would be subjects of the other. Both of them should guarantee defence of each "not merely as an ally or a friend,²⁵ but as an integral part of itself, one and indivisible." It is curious to note that Boucher also admired a plan, which proposed the total extinction of the then present race of colonists and a re-²⁶ settlement of the country from a different lineage.

It is interesting to notice Boucher's opinions concerning some of the Revolutionary leaders. Virginia was considered to be one of the most influential of all of the colonies. This was due in part to her central situation, and to the lofty character of the people who lived there. The Revolutionists were anxious, therefore, to succeed in winning Virginia over to the side of the confederacy, and they did not spare any effort in attaining this end. If they succeeded in accomplishing their object, they did not doubt but that the other southern colonies would follow in the footsteps of their neighbor. When it was therefore decided to call a congress, Mr. Randolph of Virginia, "was pitched on to be its first President," and Mr. Washington was nominated as the commander of the army, in the hope that these two men with dominant personalities, would influence²⁷ others in Virginia to follow in the footsteps of the Patriots. Boucher believes that Washington was influenced to accept the nomination because of the fear felt by the middle and southern colonies, that after the colonies were independent from Great Britain, the

25

Boucher, A View, IXXV

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Maryland Historical Magazine, IX, 56, 57

27

Boucher, A View, XXXV

northern army, (as under Cromwell's leadership in England) might rule
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 the country. Regardless of the manner in which Virginia and Maryland were influenced to enter the contest, Boucher expresses great surprise and incredibility, that two such prosperous colonies as they were, who were enjoying "all the security which the best government in the world can give," could be so rash as to engage in a civil war against a nation they loved, without actually knowing what was the real cause of the complaint, and also having an inadequate knowledge
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 of the object at which the leaders aimed.

Washington was described by Boucher as "an honest man," and one who was extraordinarily cool and cautious. He thought that the best way to conquer Washington, would be to outwit him, that is, to confuse him with the little tricks and schemes of war, with which he had had little experience, and against which he would not be able
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 to stand. Boucher at one time had been a very warm friend of General Washington. For several years he had acted as tutor to Washington's step-son, Master Custer, but as the Revolution progressed, Boucher became more and more embittered toward him, and he at length denounced Washington's friendship. He accused the General of having calmly observed the treatment, which the clergymen received at the hands of the Whigs, without making the slightest attempt to stop it. Washington, he said, "was acting with all the base malignity of a virulent Whig," and Boucher resented it. Boucher declared that he despised the man who could act in such a contemptible fashion and vowed that

 28

Boucher, A View, XXXVI

29

Ibid, XXXIV

30

Maryland Historical Magazine, VIII, 255-266 Letter to William Knox,
 1775

Washington was no longer worthy of his friendship, for he could not³¹
be in any way connected with so dishonorable a person.

In a letter to Washington, 1775, Boucher states his reasons for not becoming a Whig. "No Tory has yet in a single instance misused or injured a Whig merely for being a Whig, and whatever may be the boasted superiority of your party, it will not be denied that in some instances at least this has been in our power. With respect to Whigs, however, the case has been directly the reverse; a Tory at all in the power of a Whig never escapes ill-treatment merely because of his being a Tory. How contrary all this is to all that Liberty which Whigs are forever so forward to profess, need not be insisted on; it is so contrary to all justice and honour, that were there no reasons to determine me against it, as there are thousands, I would not be a Whig, because their principles.....lead so directly to all that is mean and unmanly." In the same letter he asserts that "all of those who with you are promoting the present apparently popular measures, are the true enemies of their country."³² Boucher was always outspoken in his convictions and never feared to utter that which he believed to be the truth.

The Sons of Liberty advocated the theory that the colonies were held directly from the Crown and that they were consequently wholly independent of Parliament. Rev. Samuel Seabury contended, that the King of Great Britain received the legal right to his title by the consent of Parliament, and that he was therefore King of

31

Notes and Queries, fifth series, VI, 162

32

Ibid, VI, 161

America by the same title that he was King of Great Britain.

Seabury was decided in his opinions concerning the Continental Congresses and the various committees and conventions. He considers the authority of such bodies to be only another form of slavery.

"If I must be enslaved," he says, "let it be to a King at least, and not by a parcel of upstart, lawless committeemen. If I must be

devoured, let it be by the jaws of a lion, and not gnawed to death

by rats and vermin." ³⁴ Seabury, like Boucher, was ready with a plan

for reconciliation. He proposed that self-government be extended

to the American colonies, but that they would still remain under a

sovereign imperial Parliament. This arrangement would unit Great

Britain with her colonies in a firmer and closer compact, than they

had ever had before. ³⁵ Cooper proposed a similar plan establishing

a general American Constitution, and which provided that Great

Britain should retain her rightful supremacy over her American col-

³⁶ onies.

Boucher and Cooper differed somewhat in their conceptions of the importance of the tax which was levied upon tea, by the British government. Boucher considered the tax to be an insignificant duty, which would not probably concern more than one-third of the people, and which would never be a hardship to any one. He pointed out that the Americans were not required to buy the tea, and that it had not been proved that this act of Parliament was unconstitutional

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Belcher, First American Civil War, 31-32

34

Beardsley, Life and Correspondence of Seabury, 35

35

Flick, Loyalism in New York, 12

36

Ibid, 12

37

and should therefore not be opposed with such force. Dr. Cooper
 thought
 that the duty was "dangerous to constitutional liberty." He
 also upheld the people in the opposition which they displayed against
 other Parliamentary measures, such as the Stamp Act, and duties plac-
 38
 ed upon various articles.

Rev. Andrew Burnaby, an Anglican clergyman, who had travelled
 for several years in America before the Revolution, wrote to General
 Washington from Greenwich, in 1778, to renew the friendship which
 he had cultivated during his visit to the colonies. Burnaby en-
 deavored to impress upon Washington's mind the fact that Great
 Britain and America could never survive independent of each other.
 He grants that the colonies at the present time are bound together
 in a common cause, but that this state of unity will long remain
 after the common enemy is removed, he is doubtful. He recalls the
 Peloponnesian war and the state of upheaval and revolt in which the
 States of Greece found themselves after the retreat of the Persians,
 and he warns the colonists to beware of a similar condition among
 the American colonies, after they should secure their independence.
 He was also skeptical in regard to the part France was playing in
 the struggle. He contended that France was insincere in proffering
 aid to the Colonies, and that she did not do this from a sense of
 generosity but from a selfish motive. She offered her services with
 the hope that the two opponents, England and America, would weaken
 each other, so as to leave America in such a state that she would
 offer herself as an easy prey to France. To avoid this calamity,

 37
 Boucher, A View, 554, 555

38
 Flick, Loyalism in New York, 12

Burnaby implores Washington to restore the happy relations which earlier existed, and which now the majority of the people longed for.³⁹

General Washington was the recipient of many appeals from Anglican clergy, urging him to take a more conciliatory attitude. Jacob Duché, a clergyman of the Church of England, in Philadelphia, wrote an interesting letter to Washington in 1777. He pictured the utter hopelessness of such resistance, and the fruitless efforts of the Patriotic army, which was not on an equal standing with that of the Royalists. He pleaded with Washington, whom he considered as the most influential Whig of that time, to repeal the Declaration of Independence, and to order a cessation of all hostilities, in order to avoid the awful horrors and cruel sufferings which were inevitable in a civil war such as they were experiencing, and to stop the heartless devastation of the country which was to them the home they loved and wanted to protect. He concludes his letter with the following words, "I love my country, I love you; but to the love of truth, the love of peace, and to the love of God, I hope I should be enabled, if called upon to the trial, to sacrifice every other inferior love."⁴⁰ Washington was not apparently greatly disturbed after reading Duché's letter, for he immediately sent it to Congress, accompanied by a note in which he expressed his contempt of such a "ridiculous and illiberal performance," which he would have returned to the author unopened if he had known what the missive contained. Washington, however, did not believe that the contents of the

39

Correspondence of the American Revolution, I, 458

40

Ibid, 455 ff

letter originated entirely with Duché, but that he was influenced in writing the appeal in the hope that it would more firmly establish himself with the British government.⁴¹ Inglis believed also, with Duché, that the King in the end would be successful, and that the rebellion was "one of the most causeless, unprovoked and unnatural that ever disgraced any country; a rebellion marked with peculiarly aggravated circumstances of guilt and ingratitude."⁴²

The Anglican clergy were, in general, not in favor of a democratic and popular form of government. They did not admire any of the democratic tendencies, and were decisive in their opposition and condemnation of such. Most of them were careful to avoid becoming involved in any of the revolutionary principles which they considered dangerous, but before the outbreak of the war, they were often active in attempting to procure a revised system of colonial government administration, which would correct the abuses of the one in operation. The opinion of many were expressed by Dr. Johnson who wrote to Benjamin Franklin just before he sailed to England, as a special agent for Pennsylvania, "would to God you were charged with pleading the same cause in behalf of all the Governments, that they might all alike be taken into the King's most immediate protection."⁴³ Their one aim was to achieve a conciliation between Great Britain and her American colonies, and to avoid a civil war. The clergy seemed to be frank and sincere in expressing their opinions, and eager to influence their congregations to follow the example which they were setting.

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Correspondence of the American Revolution, I, 448

42

Ecclesiastical Records of New York, XI, 4293

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Beardsley, History of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Conn. I, 242

CHAPTER V

The Treatment of the Anglican Clergy

The loyal clergy most of whom belonged to the Church of England, seemed to have been singled out from the so-called loyalist party, as fit objects upon which to give vent to stored up hatred and ill-feeling of the opposite party. They were seized upon the slightest and unfounded suspicions, and often treated in a cruel and inhuman manner. Little or no regard was given to the age or physical condition of the individual. He was in many instances forced to desert his wife, who was left in a helpless condition with small children, and without any means for support.

This attitude may be illustrated by a letter of Mr. Barton, who was then a missionary at Lancaster, Pennsylvania. He says that even though he has tried not to give offence to those who "usurped authority and Rule and exercised the severest Tyranny over us, yet my life and property have been threatened upon mere suspicion of being unfriendly to what is called the American cause. Indeed every clergyman of the Church of England, who dared to act upon proper principles was marked out for infamy and insult; in consequence of which the missionaries in particular have suffered greatly. Some of them have been dragged from their horses, assaulted with stones and dirt, ducked in water; obliged to flee for their lives, driven from their habitations and families, laid under arrests and imprisoned!"¹

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Perry, Historical Collections, II, 489-491

Rev. Samuel Seabury, as I have above mentioned, wrote many pamphlets bearing the pseudonym of a "Westchester Farmer." These pamphlets were seized by an angry mob of the Sons of Liberty, who tarred and feathered the offensive sheets and burned them at the stake, by way of serving as an illustration of that which they longed to do likewise to the author, if he were to be discovered. After the author's identity was disclosed, he and his family experienced all of the ill-treatment and abuse which the infuriated Patriots could inflict upon them. When Seabury's enemies were searching the house for him, they took some of their revenge upon his daughters, prodding them with bayonets. Seabury was acknowledged as a leader in the Royalist party, and the Whigs realized that he was doing as much as anyone to weaken their cause and it was deemed necessary to remove him to a place where he could do no harm. On November 22, 1775, he was seized by a group of armed men, and removed to New Haven, Connecticut, where he was carried through the streets in a most insulting manner and was then placed in a close confinement and deprived of the visits of friends except when accompanied by a guard. He was kept here for over a month and then was permitted to return to his home, but not to undisturbed peace. He was compelled to keep himself concealed and not to remain in his house long at a time. Finally it was necessary for him to leave his home and family and to seek refuge within the British lines in New York, where he remained until peace was declared.

Fines were imposed upon the clergy for refusing to fight

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Beardsley, Life and Correspondence of Seabury, 28 ff

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 against the King. An angry mob, August 1775, broke into King's College intent upon seizing Dr. Myles Cooper in his bed, shaving his head, cutting off his ears, slitting his nose, stripping him naked, and setting him adrift. Dr. Cooper was fortunate enough to escape thru a window and to evade the treacherous crowd.⁴ A novel punishment was inflicted upon the Rev. W. Charles of Dedham, Massachusetts. He was arrested and taken to a Public House, and compelled to remain all alone in a room for three-fourth of an hour, to gaze at the picture of Oliver Cromwell, as an object lesson.⁵ Rev. Beach of Newtown was persuaded and threatened if he would not consent to sign his name to articles passed by the Congress in Philadelphia, but to no avail. Rather than be imprisoned, he, in company with friends, agreed, under a heavy bond not to fight against the colonists, or to influence others against enlisting in the American forces.⁶ Rev. J.W. Weeks, the missionary at Marblehead, writes to the Society, in 1775, that "the conditions of your missionaries is truly deplorable; they have enemies all around them and no friends but God and their consciences."⁷ Seabury, in a letter to the Secretary of the S.P.G. in 1777, informs them of the death of several clergymen of the Church of England, which he believed to have resulted from the suffering caused by the persecutions and perils which they experienced at the hands of their enemies.⁸ Jonathan

3 Hawkins, Missions of the Church of England, 258

4 New York Historical Society Collections, X, 42-422 (Colden Papers)
 Tyler, Literary History, I, 393

5 Pascoe, Two Hundred Years of the S.P.G., 49
 Perry, Historical Collections, III, 594

6 Beardsley, History of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut, I, 309 ff

7 Hawkins, Missions of the Church of England, 246

8 Beardsley, Life and Correspondence of Seabury, 50-52

Boucher writes of the insult he received, when several thousand of the Sons of Liberty, hanged and shot his effigy.⁹ In another letter he tells how two loads of stone were taken to his church one Sunday, to stone him for having supposedly said, "that a Rifleman would be no Match for a common Musqueteer in the Field."¹⁰

The Sons of Liberty entered the home of Rev. Leaming of Norwalk, tore down his picture which was hanging upon the wall and after disfiguring it, they nailed the remains to a sign post. The excited Partots were not satisfied with such a mild insult. They placed him in prison, and he was deprived of all comforts including a bed. The lack of healthful sleeping quarters, resulted in a hip complaint and he was crippled for the rest of his life.¹¹ Samuel Peters, a missionary at Hebron, Connecticut, whom I have mentioned as among the most offensive of the clergy, aroused great hatred because of his loyalty and indiscreet conduct, and he was singled out for severe treatment. In August, and September, of 1774, mobs gathered at his home to enforce from him the acknowledgement that he had been in the wrong. He met them fearlessly, believing that his priestly garments would protect him, but he found that he was dealing with a people who regarded nothing which did not aid them in the attainment of that end which they were fighting for. He was taken by force to the Meeting-house Green, and here he was forced to read a confession which they had previously written for him. He left soon after for England and continued writing in defense of his

⁹ Maryland Historical Magazine, IX, 234

¹⁰ Ibid, IX, 235-236

¹¹ Beardsley, History of the Episcopal Church of Connecticut, 316

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native country.

The punishments of these unfortunate individuals were often of a surprising nature. One clergyman was seized at night, stripped naked, then tied to a tree and severely whipped, and left alone to be discovered the following morning.¹³ Another was thrown into a village pond and his food consisted of herrings, which were thrown in to him.¹⁴ Others were arrested for marrying and baptizing members of their own congregations.¹⁵ Mr. Tingley, of Delaware, who had written to relatives in New York asking them to send him some comforts for his elderly mother, sickly wife and two small children, was deprived of these articles when they arrived, even though his "dying wife begged a small part of them as medicine." Soldiers surrounded his house, which was searched for possible letters of information, and with cursing and swearing the soldiers threatened to hang him upon one of the highest trees near the house. His family had barely enough bread to eat and clothes to wear, to be comfortable.¹⁶ The Edicts of Congress and the Penal laws disturbed the peace of the clergy. Mr. Barton, of Delaware, writes in 1778, that he "cannot complain of having received any gross insults or personal abuse, except from the mob, yet so intollerable were the Penalties of these Laws, and so severe the Execution of them, that prudence of my own safety directed me, at such times as were not employed in

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- 12
Beardsley, History of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut, 306, 307
13
Hawks, Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History etc., I, 146
14
Trevelyn, The American Revolution, I, 190
15
Perry, History of the American Episcopal Church, I, 301
American Archives, fourth series, V, 405-406
16
Perry, Historical Collections, IV, 136-137

Visitations to my people, to confine myself entirely to my own house,
 which I did for two years."¹⁷

There can be little doubt but that the clergy of the Church of England were more obnoxious to the partiotic party and were punished more severely than many of their fellow loyalists. Of course most of the suspicion and distrust was brought on by the clergy refusing to sign agreements, and the manner in which they persisted in reading the ritual, containing prayers of allegiance to King George and Great Britain. They were before the public on many occasions, and the Partiot could learn readily of the decided stand which they were taking, by slipping into the Anglican churches and listening to the service, and the sermons urging the people to non-resistance. This, of course, infuriated and disgusted the men who so firmly believed that independence was the one means of assuring political liberty. This, then, was the incentive for severely beating the clergy and for drawing them through mud in order to encourage a humble attitude. They were denied council at trials, and even kept in ignorance of the charges for which they were usually convicted. They could not even walk quietly down the street without hearing insulting epithets hurled at them. They were put under strict supervision, and abuse after abuse was heaped upon them. The churches, which they had labored to build, were burned and their homes, containing all of their cherished belongings, most valuable of all the libraries, were also destroyed.¹⁸

Rev. Thomas Barton, a missionary in Delaware, who was given the alternative of resigning his vows of allegiance or finding pro-

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Perry, Historical Collections, V, 129, 130

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For further references, see the next page.

tection in the British army, in a letter to the Secretary of the S.P.G. dated January 8, 1779, and Rev. Byles in a letter May 4, 1766 expresses the state of mind of many of the Anglican clergy who had been ill-treated. Barton writes, "The Clergy of America, the missionaries in part, have suffered beyond example, and indeed beyond the records of any history, in this day of trial. Most of them have lost their all, many of them are now in a state of melancholy pilgrimage and poverty, and some of them have lately (from grief and despondency it is said) paid the last debt of nature.....what have we done to deserve this treatment from our former friends and fellow citizens? We have not intermeddled with any matters inconsistent with our callings and functions. We have studied to be quiet and to give no offence to the present rulers. We have obeyed the laws and government now in being, as far as our consciences and prior obligations would permit. We know no crime that can be alleged against us, except an honest avowal of our principles can be deemed such, and for these have we suffered a persecution as cruel as the bed of Procrustes." Rev. Byles says, "such are the horrors of civil war! - and I have nothing to console me, unless it be a consciousness that I have never contributed to kindle the destructive flame, but on the contrary, have exerted all my little influence to prevent

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Maryland Historical Magazine, VIII, 242, 246

Hawkins, Missions of the Church of England, 161-163, 251-252

(This entire volume is valuable for letters showing the condition of the clergy)

Beardsley, Life and Correspondence of Seabury, 59

(This, too, contains many references to the sufferings)

American Archives, fourth series, VI, 1651

Beardsley, History of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut, I, 317-327

Perry, Historical Collections, IV, 131, 133, 136, 137

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Beardsley, Life and Correspondence of Seabury, 57, 58

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it." I agree with Beardsley that "it is a foul blot upon the patri-
 otism of the times that these things were anywhere encouraged." 21

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Perry, Historical Collections, IV, 132,130

Hawkins, Missions of the Church of England, 250

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Beardsley, History of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut, I, 332

CHAPTER VI

Conclusion

The Anglican clergy, at the close of the Revolutionary War, were in a distressful condition. Those who had been dependent upon the S.P.G. for their support, were left penniless. Since the colonies were no longer a part of Great Britain, the Society was released from all further obligations in regard to them, for the Charter provided that only those within the realm of Great Britain were to receive contributions. The Whigs showed little sympathy and leniency toward them, and their one desire seemed to be to punish those who had refused to aid the Patriots in obtaining independency. The clergy were either actually forced to flee for their lives, or they deemed it prudent to escape before violence was inflicted. Many returned to England, while others went into Canada. The Proscription and Banishment acts were not repealed as they should have been, when Peace was declared, and the clergy suffered from the confiscation of their property. The churches and parsonages were destroyed and the clergy found that there was little foundation upon which to¹ begin a reconstruction of the parishes.

The Treaty of Peace in 1763, made no mention of religious affairs. As soon as the excitement and fermentation in the country

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Beardsley, Life and Correspondence of Seabury, 57, 70-72

Hawkins, Missions of the Church of England, 342-343

Siebert, Refugee Loyalists of Connecticut

Seibert, Dispension of the American Tories

Siebert, The Flight of the American Loyalists to British Isles

had somewhat died down, and the clergy regained a little of their old confidence, steps were taken for a reorganization of the Church. The old antagonism which had existed for so many years between the Dissenters and the Anglican clergy had not disappeared with Peace. There was a constant struggle between these two parties for many years, the Dissenters standing firm against the introduction of an American Episcopate, which the clergy were again agitating with renewed efforts.²

In conclusion, I would say that the Anglican clergy were without doubt one of the most influential of all the loyalist elements in the Revolutionary War Period. Because the majority of them had courage enough to remain true to the vows, by which they had sworn eternal allegiance to the King of England, they aroused the hatred and distrust of all of those who were not in sympathy with the Church of England, and who feared that the Anglican clergy were desirous of promoting the Anglican Church in America, for the purpose of strengthening the hold of Great Britain on her American colonies. We cannot help but admire those, who, in the face of severe opposition and suffering, continued steadfast in the execution of the duties which they considered to be right. I am convinced that the Anglican clergy exerted an influence over their congregations, and helped to mold the opinions of many who otherwise would probably have been swayed by the crowd, and would have fallen into the popular ranks of the Patriots. I shall close this discussion by quoting from a member of this group, Jonathan Boucher, who says, concerning the unfortunate relations which existed between Great Britain and

her American colonies, that "all that either country has greatly to regret on this subject is, that the prudence of the one did not keep pace with her affections, and that the humility of the other was not commensurate with her prosperity. Great Britain did not consider, that, good as her colonies were, whilst she strained every nerve to render them opulent and powerful, she was in effect advancing them still nearer to independency."³

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